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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

GEORGE HERBERT LOCKE.

THE moral and the physical aspects of high-school education make us much trouble and anxiety. We admit their importance, but, aside from a few platitudes at conventions, we make but little progress toward any practical solutions. There are but few playing fields in connection with any of our schools, and hence the work in physical and moral training is pursued where the influence of the school is but little felt. That the playing field is as much an integral part of the school as is the school building seems not to be in the minds of those who are responsible for the education of adolescent girls and boys. The remedy for this does not lie in a gymnasium. We must not allow the gymnasium to be used as a substitute for the playing field, but as a complement to it. There are many teachers who are wrestling with this subject, and we invite them to communicate the results of their experience so that this important part of high-school training may receive the attention that it deserves. The most interesting question is: "What are you doing in your school toward the solution of this problem of physical and moral education?"

That we may have an historical background the following interesting and scholarly article on "Athleticism in Greece," by Mr. E. Norman Gardiner, is reprinted from the *Journal of Education* of London, Eng.:

At the entrance of the Stadium at Olympia, the last sight that competitors would see before they entered the course, stood sixteen brazen statues of Zeus. They were called the Zanes, and were erected out of the fines imposed upon athletes who had behaved shamefully at the games. The first six were put up in the ninety-eighth Olympiad, in consequence of a certain Eupolus having bribed his rivals to let him win in the boxing. The inscriptions on the bases, which alone survive, recorded that not with money, but with swiftness of foot and bodily vigor, must one win prizes at Olympia. Fifty-six years later six more statues were set up to commemorate a similar offense committed by the Athenian Callippus in the Pentathlon. On this occasion the Athenians haughtily refused to pay or to take any part in the Olympic festival, but the god at Delphi, indignant at such impiety, declined to give them any oracle till the fine was paid. This oracle was inscribed on the base of one of the statues, together with some lines warning all competitors against such conduct. The remaining four statues recorded similar offenses on the part of certain wrestlers.

These statues are full of instruction. In the first place they give us some idea of the high standard of honor in Greek athletics. If we think of the thousands who must have competed in these games during the twelve hundred years that they were held, the fewness of the offenses is truly remarkable. The greatest precautions were taken to safeguard the honor of the games; the competitors had undergone a month's training under the eyes of the magistrates of Elis; they had sworn a solemn oath on

the altar of Zeus that they would compete fairly and abide by the rules of the games; and any transgression was therefore an act of sacrilege, an insult to the gods, and was punished as such.

But these statues are still more interesting from another point of view. Much indignation has been recently aroused by certain lines of Mr. Kipling's about "mud-died oafs" and "flanneled fools." The very violence of the criticism upon them, most of them utterly beside the point, shows that Mr. Kipling has touched a sore place. No intelligent person can imagine for a moment that Mr. Kipling intended to attack games or athletics in themselves. What he attacked was the over-athleticism which we see rampant around us, whether in the form of the professional pure and simple, who makes his living by affording a spectacle to loafers, or of the still worse professional amateur, who, having no need to work for his living, neglects his profession, if he has any, and devotes the best years of his life to purely selfish enjoyment. Such a life can no more make a man a useful citizen than reading newspaper reports or watching matches can make him a sportsman. It is a far cry from Mr. Kipling to Euripides; but, had Mr. Kipling lived in Athens at the close of the fifth century, he would have found similar cause for his indignation. The language of Euripides, if perhaps more refined, is no less scathing: "Of all the myriad evils throughout Greece there is none worse than the race of athletes; they never learn how to live well, nor can they endure poverty or evil fortune. Honored in their youth they stalk about as public ornaments, but when old age comes upon them they are thrown aside like old coats that have lost their nap." Perhaps Euripides was prejudiced — his parents had tried to make him an athlete against his will — but the verdict of Plato, an enthusiast for physical training, and himself a competitor at the games, of Socrates, Aristotle, and many others, is the same. Now it is to this period that the first Zanes belong. Never had athletics been more popular; but this popularity had brought its own dangers, and beneath its glamour the poet, the philosopher, the statesman could see the evils which were to sap the life of Greek athletics and render them an object of contempt to the more practical Romans. Let me try and describe briefly the character of the early Greek games and the causes that led to their decay.

Greek sports, as we read of them in Homer, and as they doubtless continued in the early days of Olympia, were merely an expression of intense national energy, the joy in all activity, physical or intellectual, by virtue of which all that is young and vigorous, whether nation or individual, loves to match itself against others in all contests of mind or body. This spirit of emulation and consequent love of adventure characterized the Greeks of old no less than the English of the Elizabethan age; in colonial activity and love of sport we are the heirs of Greece. So, as in the days of the tournament or the archery meeting, every important occasion would be celebrated by sports. No training was needed; war and the chase kept all the Homeric warriors in training, and the events in the games were all connected with these pursuits. But as life became more settled and more civilized, and men began to congregate in towns, war and the chase were no longer the conditions of everyday life, and it became necessary to supplement them by a system of physical training. The object of this was principally to make every man fit to defend his country. But the Greek was always an artist and an idealist, and he introduced into his physical training the ideal of physical beauty, of harmony and symmetry. Every Greek had from boyhood to undergo such a training, not in one, but in many forms of exercise, the object being not to produce special development or to break records, but to make him a useful

citizen, healthy and beautiful. This was the ideal of the golden age of Greek games, the beginning of the fifth century. It is the Graces, according to Pindar, that give victory in the games, "by whose gift come unto men all pleasant things and sweet, and the wisdom of a man and his beauty, and the splendor of his fame;"<sup>1</sup> and Pindar never tires of singing of the beauty of the victor, "deft-handed, nimble-limbed, with the light of valor in his eyes." It was this ideal that made the Greek gymnasium and palæstra the school of the finest sculpture the world has ever seen.

Hence, too, came the glory of the great Greek games; they were under the special protection of the gods, and poets sang how gods and heroes had founded them, and themselves had won the victors' crown. The victors themselves received honors almost divine; for they represented the embodiment of the nation's ideal. Sculptors and poets immortalized their beauty and their prowess for the imitation of posterity.

But toward the close of the fifth century there came a change in the attitude of poets and philosophers toward athletics. "Can a man fight against the enemies of his country with a discus in his hand?" asks Euripides. Even the beauty of the athlete is no more. "The runner," says Socrates, "has big legs and narrow shoulders, the boxer big shoulders and thin legs." Later on Epaminondas complains that athletics do not train a soldier. What is the reason for this change? It is the decline in the character of the games themselves; and this decline is due to two causes which are very much in evidence in our own times—money and professionalism.

In the earlier days rich and poor met on an equal footing in the gymnasium and at the games. Nobles and princes, even kings, competed in contests of strength or speed of foot, and rich and poor were honored alike in their victory. If Pindar sings of the triumphs of the wealthy Diagoridæ, Simonides does not disdain to commemorate the victory of the poor fisherman "who once upon his shoulders carried fish from Argos to Tegea." But as the games, and especially the Olympic games, grew from local festivals into national, and princes and nobles flocked to them in ever greater numbers from the rich colonies of the East and the West, a different spirit grew up. These powerful princes and nobles from over the sea disdained the simpler contests of physical power, in comparison with the chariot races and horse races, where they might display their might and magnificence. A king of Macedon had once thought it an honor to be allowed to compete in the foot race; but this was no longer the spirit of the nobility, which was rather that of Alcibiades, who boasted that he had enhanced the glory of Athens by sending seven chariots to compete at Olympia, and winning three out of the first four places. The character of the chariot race itself had changed. In Homer the heroes drove their own chariots, and by their own judgment, skill, and nerve helped to win the victory. At Olympia it was no longer the owner, but the paid charioteer, who drove; the owner paid and took the crown and glory, but it was the horses, the trainers, and the drivers that won the race. Plutarch tells us a delightful story of the Spartan king Agesilaus, whose sister Cynisca won the chariot race at Olympia. Finding that the Spartans were growing too fond of horses and of chariots, he himself persuaded his sister to enter for the chariot race. "This he did to show the Greeks that a victory of that kind did not depend on any extraordinary spirit or ability, but rather upon riches and expense." What a comment on much of our modern horse racing and yachting!

But, if the simpler sports ceased to be fashionable, they were as popular as ever, and the rewards for the victors, if less in point of honor, offered still greater attractions

<sup>1</sup> *Odes of Pindar*. E. Myers.

from a pecuniary point of view. In early days the Greeks were a nation of athletes; jumping, running, throwing the disc or the javelin, wrestling, and boxing were a part of their everyday life, and no special training was needed; a simple training diet of figs, cheese, and bread was prescribed, possibly with a view of putting all, rich and poor, on an equality. Unfortunately, as the competition increased, it was discovered that special excellence in special events could be produced by special training; the runner or jumper might need activity, but the boxer and wrestler needed weight. So one Dromeus in the fifth century introduced a diet of meat. The strong man trained on quantities of meat naturally became heavy and coarse; his beauty was gone. We can trace the gradual change in sculpture and in painting from the graceful figures of the sixth and fifth centuries to the brutal repulsiveness of the Roman boxers in the baths of Caracalla, with their clumsy, over-developed bodies and small, narrow heads. A Panathenaic vase in the British Museum, dated 336 B. C., is an interesting example of the transition. The work of Dromeus was completed by one Stymphalus of Selymbria, a contemporary of Socrates, "who ruined athletics by introducing elaborate rules for eating, drinking, and exercise."<sup>1</sup> This was the real beginning of specialization and of professionalism, the curses of true athletics; specialization produces one-sided development; professionalism converts what should be a means of education and of recreation into an end in itself. Instead of fostering the spirit of sport, and furthering the physical education of a nation, such athletics tend to produce a class of professional athletes and a nation of spectators. This is the athleticism that Euripides satirized in Athens, as Mr. Kipling has done in England.

And with professionalism came other evils: the high spirit of honor was lost, and corruption began to appear. The Olympic games had existed for nearly four hundred years before Eupolus was fined for buying his victory in boxing. It is most curious to note how history repeats itself. The two forms of sport which were the first to be corrupted by professionalism in Greece were, as in England, boxing and wrestling. The healthiest and noblest of all sports while practiced in the spirit of amateurism, by reason of the high code of honor which they demand, they are the most readily degraded when practiced as a means of living. For years they were utterly discredited in England in consequence, and only of recent years have they begun to revive.

With professionalism, too, partly as cause, partly as effect, came a great increase in the number of athletic meetings and the value of the prizes. At Olympia the prize was never more than a crown of olive; but even there the victor reaped substantial rewards on his return home, and elsewhere the prizes were often extremely valuable, and sometimes in Ionia took the form of money. Pausanias tells us of an Alexandrian boxer who was fined for being late at Olympia; he excused himself on the ground that his ship had been detained by contrary winds. It was proved, however, by witnesses that he had really been collecting money at the games in Ionia. This was in the late days of Olympia; but pot-hunting must have been common long before this time; for the great boxer and pankratiast Theagenes is said to have won no less than fourteen hundred crowns.

Such is briefly the history of athleticism in Greece. I have tried to point out some of the parallels which it affords with the present state of athletics in England. No nation ever had a higher ideal of athletics than the Greeks; nowhere did athletics hold a higher place, connected as they were with the whole life of the nation—reli-

<sup>1</sup> PROFESSOR GARDNER, *New Chapters from Greek History*.

gion, politics, education, art—and serving not only to develop the individual, but as a bond of union between the scattered members of the Greek race throughout the whole world. But Greek athletics failed to save the nation; they failed from neglect of that principle of proportion and harmony that distinguishes all that is best in Greek literature and art; over-developed and over-specialized they became the monopoly of a class, and ceased to affect the life of the nation. The older sports, in which all competed in friendly and honorable rivalry, gave way to professional displays where an unathletic crowd could enjoy the excitement of the contest by proxy. Love of excitement took the place of love of sport, and the last stage was reached in the brutal exhibition of the Roman gladiatorial shows. What athletics did for the Greeks of the fifth century, what they have done for our own race, it is hard to over-estimate. But let us take to heart before it is too late the lessons of Greek history by keeping athletics in their true place, as a means, not as an end; let us play in order that we may live, not live in order that we may play; and let us remember, too, that it is better to play oneself than to watch others playing.